

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 10-11, without prejudice.

1. (Previously amended) A liquid crystal display device comprising:
a liquid crystal cell comprising a pair of substrates and a liquid crystal layer arranged between the pair of substrates;
first and second polarizers arranged on either side of the liquid crystal cell;
a first retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the first polarizer;
a second retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the second polarizer;
each of the first and second retardation plates having an optical axis in a plane parallel to the surfaces of the substrates and a retardation of substantially $\lambda/4$, the optical axis of the first retardation plate being perpendicular to the optical axis of the second retardation plate;
the first and second polarizers having polarizing axes arranged at an angle of 45° with respect to the optical axes of the first and second retardation plates; and
the liquid crystal cell having a plurality of pixels arranged such that each pixel includes at least first and second regions in which an alignment of the liquid crystal in the first region is different from an alignment of the liquid crystal in the second region.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously amended) A liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the liquid crystal molecules are aligned in the azimuth except for 45° from the polarizing axes of the polarizers.

4. (Previously amended) A liquid crystal display device according to claim 1, wherein the liquid crystal of the liquid crystal cell is of a vertical alignment type, and the liquid crystal cell includes structures of slits arranged on or in an electrode of at least one of the substrates, each pixel being divided into said at least first and second regions due to the provision of the structures or the slits so that a state of alignment of the liquid crystal molecules located on one side of the structure or the slit is different from a state of alignment of the liquid crystal molecules located on the other side of the structure or slit.

5. (Previously amended) A liquid crystal display device according to claim 4, wherein liquid crystal molecules located on the structure or the slit are aligned, accompanying a change in the azimuth upon application of voltage.

6. (Previously amended) A liquid crystal display device comprising:
a liquid crystal cell comprising a pair of substrates and a liquid crystal

layer arranged between the pair of substrates;

first and second polarizers arranged on either side of the liquid crystal cell;

a first retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the first polarizer;

a second retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the second polarizer;

each of the first and second retardation plates having an optical axis in a plane parallel to the surfaces of the substrates and a retardation of substantially $\lambda/4$, the optical axis of the first retardation plate being perpendicular to the optical axis of the second retardation plate;

the first and second polarizers having polarizing axes arranged at an angle of 45° with respect to the optical axes of the first and second retardation plates;

the liquid crystal cell having a plurality of pixels arranged such that each of the pixels includes at least first and second regions in which an alignment of the liquid crystal in the first region is different from an alignment of the liquid crystal in the second region;

the liquid crystal of the liquid crystal cell being of a vertical alignment type, the liquid crystal cell including structures or slits arranged on or in an electrode of at least one of the substrates, each pixel being divided into said at least first and second regions due to the provision of the structures or the slits so that a state of alignment of the liquid

crystal molecules located on one side of the structure or the slit is different from a state of alignment of the liquid crystal molecules located on the other side of the structure or the slit; and

at least one of the pair of substrates having electrically conductive linear structures which protrude with respect to a substantially flat surface of the electrode.

7. (Previously amended) A liquid crystal display device comprising:
 - a liquid crystal cell comprising a pair of substrates and a liquid crystal layer arranged between the pair of substrates;
 - first and second polarizers arranged on either side of the liquid crystal cell;
 - a first retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the first polarizer;
 - a second retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the second polarizer;
 - each of the first and second retardation plates having an optical axis in a plane parallel to the surfaces of the substrates and a retardation of substantially $\lambda/4$, the optical axis of the first retardation plate being perpendicular to the optical axis of the second retardation plate;
 - the first and second polarizers having polarizing axes arranged at an angle of 45° with respect to the optical axes of the first and second retardation plates;

the liquid crystal cell having a plurality of pixels arranged such that each of the pixels includes at least first and second regions in which an alignment of the liquid crystal in the first region is different from an alignment of the liquid crystal in the second region;

the liquid crystal of the liquid crystal cell being of a vertical alignment type, the liquid crystal cell including structures or slits arranged on or in an electrode of at least one of the substrates, each pixel being divided into said at least first and second regions due to the provision of the structures or the slits so that a state of alignment of the liquid crystal molecules located on one side of the structure or the slit is different from a state of alignment of the liquid crystal molecules located on the other side of the structure or the slit; and

a retardation in the plane of the retardation plate being not less than 120 nm and not more than 160 nm.

8. (Previously amended) A liquid crystal display device according to claim 7, wherein an angle between the absorbing axis of the polarizer and the aligning direction or the inclining direction of liquid crystal molecules is not less than 5°, and the viewing angle characteristics of contrast ratio is symmetrical with respect to the horizontal and/or vertical direction.

9. (Original) A liquid crystal display device according to claim 7, wherein at least one optical layer having a negative retardation is arranged between the retardation plate and the liquid crystal cell or between the retardation plate and the polarizer.

10-11. (Cancelled)

12-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously presented) A liquid crystal display device comprising:
a liquid crystal cell comprising a pair of substrates and a liquid crystal layer arranged between the pair of substrates, the liquid crystal of the liquid crystal cell being of a vertical alignment type;

first and second polarizers arranged on either side of the liquid crystal cell;

a first retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the first polarizer;

a second retardation plate arranged between the liquid crystal cell and the second polarizer;

each of the first and second retardation plates having an optical axis in a plane parallel to the surfaces of the substrates and a retardation of substantially $\lambda/4$, the optical axis of the first retardation plate being perpendicular to the optical axis of the second

retardation plate, the negative retardation $((n_x + n_y) / 2 - n_z)$ of the retardation plates being approximately zero;

a first optical plate arranged on or near the liquid crystal cell and having refractive indices in the relationship of $n_x = n_y > n_z$, the first optical plate having a retardation the value of which is identical to that of the liquid crystal layer and the sign of which is reverse to that of the liquid crystal layer;

a second optical plate having refractive indices in the relationship of $n_x = n_y < n_z$, said second optical plate or a part thereof being arranged on or near the first polarizer; and

a third optical plate arranged on or near the second polarizer and having refractive indices in the relationship of $n_x > n_y = n_z$.

15. (Previously presented) A liquid crystal display device according to claim 14, wherein the retardation of the second optical plate is not less than 80 nm and not more than 300 nm.

16. (Previously presented) A liquid crystal display device according to claim 14, wherein the retardation of the third optical plate is not less than 25 nm and not more than 160 nm.

Respectfully submitted,

GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By 

Patrick G. Burns

Registration No. 29,367

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300 South Wacker Drive
Suite 2500
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Telephone: 312.360.0080
Facsimile: 312.360.9315
Customer No. 24978